



Dbeibah takes action to rationalize public spending in wake of Audit Bureau report

In the wake of the public criticism following the publication of the Audit Bureau report, Prime Minister Abdul Hamid Dbeibah issued Order No. 6 of 2022 to codify several operating expenses related to travel, accommodation, and subsistence for government officials.

"This comes within the framework of a plan to rationalize consumer spending and mobilize resources to implement several strategic development projects," the PM media office said on Facebook.

In the circular, the PM prohibited ministerial officials and employees from receiving or offering gifts, mobile phones, computers, and vehicles, at the government expense while setting limits on meals, traveling tickets, and accommodation.

"All meal catering services would be suspended as of the beginning of next November, provided they were limited only to hot drinks and water, except security and guard personnel, and would

be replaced by cash support at the beginning of next year."

The decree placed a buy stop order on vehicles, except service cars and ambulances, provided they are approved by the Council of Ministers, based on a proposal from the concerned minister.

Travel tickets would only be booked for an official mission provided that the duration of assignments does not exceed five days except in cases of necessity. All ministerial employees other than the ministers will fly in the commercial class.

According to the text, the government will not cover the lease payment for ministerial employees and officials, except those granted this advantage by the legislation in force.

The PM's move comes days after the Audit Bureau published its report for the year 2021, in which it criticized the expansion of government spending, especially on meals, trips, phones, cars, and others.

Politics

Politics

One child killed, five injured as clashes rock Zawiya on Sunday

Armed clashes in Zawiya on Sunday claimed the life of a child and injured five others, spokesman for the Emergency and Ambulance Service Osama Ali has confirmed.

The emergency department at the Zawiya Hospital said it received seven people as a result of the clashes, indicating that the injuries ranged from severe to moderate.

Meanwhile, clashes continue between armed groups in Zawiya, near the Bir Al-Ghanam Bridge, located in the city center.

In a related context, the Emergency and Ambulance Service confirmed that its teams in Zawiya have not been able to enter the areas of clashes in the city center.

The ambulance service called on residents to stay away from areas of clashes, including Khartoum Street in the Al-Ramha district near the Zawiya University.

Meanwhile, the Red Crescent branch in the city launched appeals to the disputing parties to cease hostilities and allow a safe passage for the stranded families.

Politics

Norland: Dbeibah, Bashagha cannot run Libya



The US Ambassador to Libya, Richard Norland, says that Libya needs a new legitimate government, as he criticized the heads of the two competing governments, Abdul Hamid Dbeibah and Fathi Bashagha saying they are incapable of running the country.

Norland's comments came during an interview with Sky News Arabia broadcasted on Saturday.

"I believe that neither of the two prime ministers in Libya can manage the country, and what we need now is a general agreement on a fully legitimate government that has the strength and confidence to manage the affairs of all Libyans," Norland told Sky News reporter, insisting that this will only happen through elections.

Ambassador Norland considered the deep mistrust between the Libyans, besides the interference of regional actors, one of the fundamental issues hindering the peace process.

"There are security and economic interests at stake, so finding solutions to such deep problems will not be easy."

As the US ambassador put it, the ongoing diplomatic move this week in New York reflects that everyone understands that the status quo cannot continue amid the recent violence in Libya.

Norland blamed the "controversial candidates" for the failure of the 24 December elections last year that were called off at the last minute.

The Libyans are frustrated with the dramatic increase in violence in conjunction with the high prices and power cuts, the US diplomat said, as he expressed support for Libyans' right to question the reason for not holding the elections.

Norland added that the US role in Libya should not be exaggerated and said his country wanted to use its influence for the international mobilization of the electoral process.

Politics

Gaddafi's Secretary says Sarkozy personally asked Gaddafi to fund his 2007 presidential campaign



French newspaper MEDIAPART said the Secretary off Muammar Gaddafi, Bashir Saleh, gave a statement to the public prosecution services of Libya's internationally recognised Government of National Unity saying that he was informed how Nicolas Sarkozy directly asked Gaddafi for "help" with his 2007 presidential election campaign.

The newspaper said Bashir said he was told Sarkozy made the approach to Gaddafi during a visit to Tripoli on October 6th 2005, when Gaddafi reportedly replied "If my friend Chirac does not stand, I am ready to help you".

The Libyan prosecutors have also obtained a very detailed account from Gaddafi's former personal secretary, Ahmed Ramadan, alleging how the regime funded Sarkozy's 2007 campaign.

The details of Saleh's statement, obtained by Libyan prosecutors who travelled to question him in Dubai in 2019 were given in June this year to the judicial investigation opened in France into the suspected funding by the Gaddafi regime of Sarkozy's 2007 election campaign.

"The judge-led probe has placed Sarkozy, 67, under investigation for "corruption", "criminal conspiracy", "illicit campaign financing" and "receiving the proceeds of the misappropriation of public funds". The newspaper said.

Saleh's statements are now added to the case file of the French investigation, the newspaper said, adding that the Libyan prosecutors had separately questioned Saleh in the framework of an international judicial cooperation agreed with the French. Saleh has previously claimed that

he knew nothing of the Gaddafi regime's alleged funding of Sarkozy's campaign. MEDIAPART revealed a document on April 28th 2012 recovered from the archives of the Gaddafi regime and it was a note dated December 2006 and addressed to Saleh by the then head of Libya's foreign intelligence agency Moussa Koussa, who detailed an agreement to fund Sarkozy's 2007 presidential election campaign.

"On May 3rd 2012, Saleh was secretly smuggled out of France in an operation involving Bernard Squarcini, then Head of the French domestic intelligence service, and Alexandre Djouhri, a business intermediary close to Sarkozy and now a key suspect in the Libyan funding investigation." The newspaper reported.

Politics

Libyan detainee at Guantánamo Bay to be transferred to third country

New York Times has reported that a national security board cleared on Friday a Libyan man, Ismail Ali Faraj Ali Bakush - 54 -, who has been held at Guantánamo Bay without charge for 20 years to be transferred to another country if one can be found to take him.

The newspaper indicated that this is a way of continuing the Biden administration's effort to reduce the detainee population at the US Navy base in Cuba.

"The decision in the case of Ismail Ali Faraj Ali Bakush means that diplomats are now seeking to reach security agreements for the transfer of 22 of the 36 men currently held as law of war prisoners at Guantánamo," the report added, saying that Bakush is the last so-called low value prisoner being held as an indefinite detainee in the war on terror that began in response to the September 11, 2001, attacks.

Bakush was arrested in Lahore, Pakistan, in May 2002 and sent to Guantánamo Bay three months later. A US intelligence report from January described him as an explosives expert who "probably provided operational support to key Al Qaeda figures."

"At Guantánamo, he was held as a member of the Qaeda-affiliated Libyan Islamic Fighting Group, which the State Department designated as a terrorist organization from 2004 to 2015." The New York Times added.

"In an apparent nod to the instability of Libya, the Periodic Review Board — an interagency group with representatives from the Pentagon, the intelligence agencies and various cabinet agencies — recommended that he be transferred to a third country "with strong rehabilitation capabilities," integration support and a willingness to monitor his activities and restrict his travel." The report explained.

Politics

Joint statement by US, France, Germany, Italy, UK to back new head of UN mission in Libya



A joint statement by the US, France, Germany, Italy, and the United Kingdom has reiterated support for the Special Representative of the Secretary-General Abdoulaye Bathily as he takes up his mandate to head the UN mission in Libya.

A statement released by the US State Department on Friday indicated that the senior officials of the US and the four EU countries met on Thursday on the margins of the UN General Assembly in New York to review the ongoing crisis in Libya.

"The officials affirmed their full support for UN mediation aimed at producing a constitutional basis to enable free, fair, and inclusive presidential and parliamentary elections throughout Libya in the shortest possible time," the statement read.

The group also stressed the importance of having transparent management of oil revenues and agreeing on a unified executive with a mandate focused on preparing for elections.

The western diplomats underscored their rejection of any use of violence and reiterated support for full implementation of the October 23, 2020, ceasefire agreement.



Economy

GNU aims to make tourism a mainstay of the country's economy

The Prime Minister of the Government of National Unity (GNU), Abdel Hamid Dbeibah, has confirmed his government goal to make tourism in all its aspects, an essential source of the national economy.

This came during his participation, on Tuesday, in the celebration of the International Day, organized by the Ministry of Tourism and Handicrafts, according to the government media office. At the conclusion of the celebration, a number of national figures who worked in the field of tourism during the past years were honored.



Economy

Economy minister, EU ambassador join workshop on challenges facing investment climate in Libya

Radisson Blu Al Mahary Hotel in Tripoli has hosted a workshop joined by Minister of Economy Muhammad Al-Hawij, and the European Union Ambassador to Libya, José Sabadell, to discuss the challenges facing the business and investment environment in Libya.

Al-Hawij stressed the importance of the partnership between Libya and the European Union in all economic, environmental, security, and political fields, as he highlighted Libya's geographical location and its role in stabilizing the Mediterranean region. He also outlined the economic ties between Europe and Africa through cooperation and joint investment in traditional and renewable energy, free zones, and transit trade, besides "Green and Blue" tourism.

For his part, the EU diplomat stressed the importance of the EU's cooperation with Libya in improving the business environment and investment climate, saying that Libya's stability is a priority for the bloc.



Economy

GNU aims to make tourism a mainstay of the country's economy

Libya's Central Bank (CBL) has launched an electronic system to facilitate the functioning of commercial banks operating in Libya. The Head of the CBL, Saddek Elkaber, disclosed the matter on Wednesday during a meeting with general managers of commercial banks at the Banking and Monetary Control Department HQ. The system enables banks to submit their data automatically in a unified electronic format. It also provides a modern mechanism for collecting and displaying data and detailed information related to the banking sector, preparing reports and monetary and

banking statistics, besides following up on safety and financial stability indicators.

Earlier this month, Prime Minister Abdul Hamid Dbeibah discussed with the CBL head the observations of the bank's latest report, which indicated a low revenue in some government agencies, including the telecommunications and customs sectors.

The meeting dealt with government spending and expanding transparency and public disclosure in all government bodies, according to a statement by the government.



Economy

Aoun discusses with British Ambassador the return of British companies to work in oil sector

The Minister of Oil and Gas in the Government of National Unity, Mohammed Aoun, has discussed in a meeting with the British Ambassador to Libya, Caroline Hurndall, cooperation with British companies, and their return to work in the oil and gas sector.

Aoun gave an overview of the mechanisms of joint cooperation between the two countries within the framework of the laws in force in the Libyan state, especially in the oil and gas sector, stressing the commitment of the Libyan state and the ministry to reduce carbon emissions, as a committee was formed from various sectors to prepare a vision in this regard.

He also stressed the importance of the economic and political role of the United Kingdom in contributing to the stability of Libya.

For her part, Hurndall pointed to the importance of Libya's security and economic stability, and the willingness of British companies to contribute to the Libyan energy sector.



Economy

Aoun, Tunisian Ambassador discuss the return of Tunisian oil companies to work in Libya

The Minister of Oil and Gas, Mohammed Aoun, has discussed with the Tunisian Ambassador to Libya, Al-Assaad Ajili, cooperation with Tunisian companies and their return to work in the oil and gas sector in Libya.

Ajili reviewed the possibility of holding a workshop between the authorities concerned with the oil industry in the two countries, while Aoun stressed the importance of holding these meetings in Libya.

Aoun also stressed the state's ability, with its expertise in the field of exploration and production, to provide technical and legal assistance to Tunisia, confirming the importance of Tunisia for the various activities of oil companies that run offshore operations.



Economy

Libya could join NIGAL gas pipeline project that extends from Nigeria to Europe

Libya is close to joining the Trans-Saharan gas pipeline (also known as: NIGAL pipeline) that transfers gas from Nigeria to Europe, a boost necessary for Europeans amid the current energy crisis despite the development of another ongoing pipeline project that connects Nigeria to Algeria.

The Oil and Gas Minister Mohammed Oun said last Sunday that they had given the Government of National Unity a study regarding the NIGAL pipeline that pumps gas from Nigeria to Europe, and according to the relevant authorities, it would pass

through Niger and Libya before the final destination: Europe; a route that goes at odds with the route agreed on by Algeria, Nigeria, and Niger.

The chances for Libya to be part of the NIGAL pipeline project are slim despite ongoing negotiations on its viability with Nigeria, particularly; between Libyan and Nigerian officials and African Oil Ministers in a recent ministerial meeting for OPEC members. However, the security situation in Libya still encumbers the project.

Algeria and Nigeria signed on July 28 an

agreement to officially start the pipeline project: 4000 kilometers long, to transfer gas via Niger from Nigeria to Algerian coast and then to Europe.

Likewise, Morocco signed an MoU with Nigeria and West Africa countries on September 16 to build a gas pipeline: 5660 kilometers long; that transfers gas to Europe despite difficult logistics as the pipeline would go through 15 countries in West Africa before reaching Europe.

Opinions



New developments of international positions on Libyan crisis

By Abdullah Alkabir,
a Libyan political writer and commentator

Despite consensus among major powers of the UN Security Council on the Special Envoy of UN Secretary-General to Libya, after a long dispute and rejection of several personalities nominated by the Secretary-General, the Senegalese Abdoulaye Bathily has not yet begun to exercise his duties. The reason may be due to his need for some time to see thoroughly all aspects of the crisis, its developments, and the appropriate approaches to employ, as well as the experiences of former envoys and the reasons for their failures, before embarking on dealing with it, and most importantly preparing for an acceptable initiative that can gain approval of the parties to the conflict, and mobilize international support for it before starting its implementation.

While, the political parties are awaiting international positions through what the new envoy will present, the speaker of the House of Representatives presented an initiative that would place him at the helm of a new Presidential Council (PC), with his acceptance of Abdel Hamid Dbeibah to remain as prime minister, and according to press reports, the head of the High Council of State would be deputy for the western region at the PC, and another deputy from the south.

The speaker of the House of Representatives presented his initiative to some regional parties, to which he has long been hostile, such as Turkey and Qatar, and until recently classifying them as countries supporting terrorism, but there are no indications that he has obtained the required support. This is because Aqila Saleh's moves fall within the scope of the

developments of the Egyptian position, and there has been no tangible progress so far in all aspects of the Turkey and Egypt dispute.

The initiative, however, including Agila's acceptance of the continuation of the Dbeibah's government, means that he does not object to the termination of the Bashagha government, if the price is rewarding, which is the re-formation of the Presidential Council to take over himself its presidency, this promoted Bashagha and Hafter to dust off their alliance and prepare for the new possible alliance between Agila and Dbeibah.

In the last session of the House of Representatives, Aqila Saleh attacked the Presidential Council, accusing it of bias and impartiality, pointing out that the presidential powers did not include the issuance of a constitutional rule and laws for elections. He had even accused the Head of the PC, Menfi of standing behind the events that led to the setting of the HoR on fire. Agila's statements against the PC were interpreted as a preparation to declare his desire publicly to head a new PC, which means that he did not lose hope completely in terms of the acceptance of his initiative as a political settlement that eventually leads to elections.

President of the Presidential Council, Menfi avoided clash with Aqila, and he did not issue statements or counter positions, but he did not take long to respond in his own way, in his speech before the United Nations General Assembly, where he reaffirmed the Presidential Council's readiness to intervene and end the crisis.

According to press reports, the major

countries supporting the elections will give the presidents of the House of Representatives and the High Council of State a last chance to agree on the constitutional basis and election laws, within a specified period, and if they fail, the matter will be referred to the Presidential Council.

Recent joint statement by Western countries, following a meeting of their senior officials during which the Libyan crisis was discussed, affirmed support for the new envoy and for the UN mediation to lay a constitutional basis for the elections. The statement included an agreement on a unified executive body with a mandate that focuses on preparing for elections. This is the first time that a practical proposal has been referred to that could contribute to removing some obstacles, addressing part of the concerns, and facilitating the path towards elections.

The proposed body will not be a third government, its mandate, according to the statement, is for elections only. Two days later, the US envoy to Libya, Ambassador Norland, stated that "What we need now is a general agreement on a fully legitimate government, and this will only happen through elections." Thus, it can be said that the international position is working to close all doors leading to extension of the transitional phase through political settlement deals, and will not support any initiative on power sharing, through the formation of a consensual government between the conflicting parties.

Disclaimer: The views and opinions expressed in this article are those of the writer, and do not necessarily reflect those of the Libya Observer



Health

Ministry of Health launches a project to support infection control units in emergency departments

The Ministry of Health of the Government of National Unity has launched a project to support infection control units in emergency and ambulance departments in a number of medical centers and hospitals, in cooperation with the World Health Organization (WHO) and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF).

The project was approved by the Deputy Prime Minister-Minister of Health in charge, Ramadan Abu Janah, in coordination between the Departments of Quality Control, Health Emergencies, and the International Cooperation Office of the Ministry of Health, according to the Ministry media office.

In its first phase, the project aims to support and rehabilitate 48 medical and paramedical personnel from the infection control departments and units within eight health facilities in the southern region, according to the correct scientific methods for infection control.



Health

Libya's debts in Jordan exceed \$211 million

The Chairman of Private Hospitals Association (PHA) in Jordan, Fawzi Al-Hammouri, confirmed, on Sunday, his country's reception of patients from all countries, except Libya.

Al-Hammouri added that medical tourism from Libya has been suspended for more than a year, due to the accumulation of debts on the Libyan government, which exceeded 211 million dollars over the span of a decade, indicating that a Libyan committee visited Amman two months ago to discuss the debt file.

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Education

Tripoli University hosts conference on challenges facing the Arabic language

The University of Tripoli hosted a conference Tuesday to shed light on the challenges facing the Arabic language under the title (The Arabic language between blooming and fading).

The Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research supervised the event in cooperation with the Arabic Language Department at the University of Tripoli and the Faculty of Sharia in Tajoura.

The event featured research papers, which were presented by professors from the University of Tripoli and Sabha, in addition to an exhibition of the scriptures of the Noble Qur'an.

Among the chief guests in the conference, which concludes on Wednesday, is the Minister of Higher Education and Scientific Research Omran Al-Qib, the President of Tripoli University, Khaled Aoun, the President of the Arabic Language Academy, Abdul Hamid Al-Haram, and an array of university professors and interested parties.



Life

Organization for Science and Wildlife calls for government help to protect marine environment

The Organization for Science and Wildlife has expressed its dissatisfaction with the neglect of the results of the dead fish samples in the Derna seaport, which sparked widespread controversy in the environmental and scientific community, as 14 species of fish perished.

"The organization faced difficulties in analyzing the samples, due to the lack of any governmental support, as it is a non-profit organization whose goal is to take care of the marine environment, and to follow up on everything that may pose a threat to it", the Chairman of the Organization for Science and Wildlife, Ezz El-Nasr Ebizio said to the Libyan News Agency.

Ebizio demanded the presence of analysis laboratories within the city of Derna, in order to facilitate the organization's task. Social media platforms circulated pictures and videos showing the death of large numbers of fish in the port of Derna, while specialists attributed this to the use of "poisons or explosives" by some fishermen to catch them, warning of the serious impact on fisheries and food security.



Sports

Libya takes over Tanzania 2-1 in friendly football tournament

The Libyan national football team took over Tanzania 2-1 in the closing match of the friendly tournament hosted by Benghazi.

Libya's Mohamed Soula opened his record of scores in minute 21 from a penalty kick on the grounds of the Benina Martyrs Stadium after Anas Salto got a foul inside the area.

Striker Saeed Khamis of Tanzania leveled the score for his team in minute 40.

In minute 48, Soula gave his team the second goal after a neat pass from Ahmed Al-Muqassi.

In the overall match, Libya's team was relatively better and had control on the ground, posing a threat to the guests on more than one occasion.

With this result, the Libyan national football team gets the title of the friendly tournament after obtaining four points from two matches, followed by Tanzania with three and Uganda with one spot.

The Libyan team had a 0-0 draw with Uganda in the opening match, and Tanzania won 1-0 against Uganda in the second friendly match of the tournament.



Sports

Libya clinches six medals in weightlifting championship in Morocco

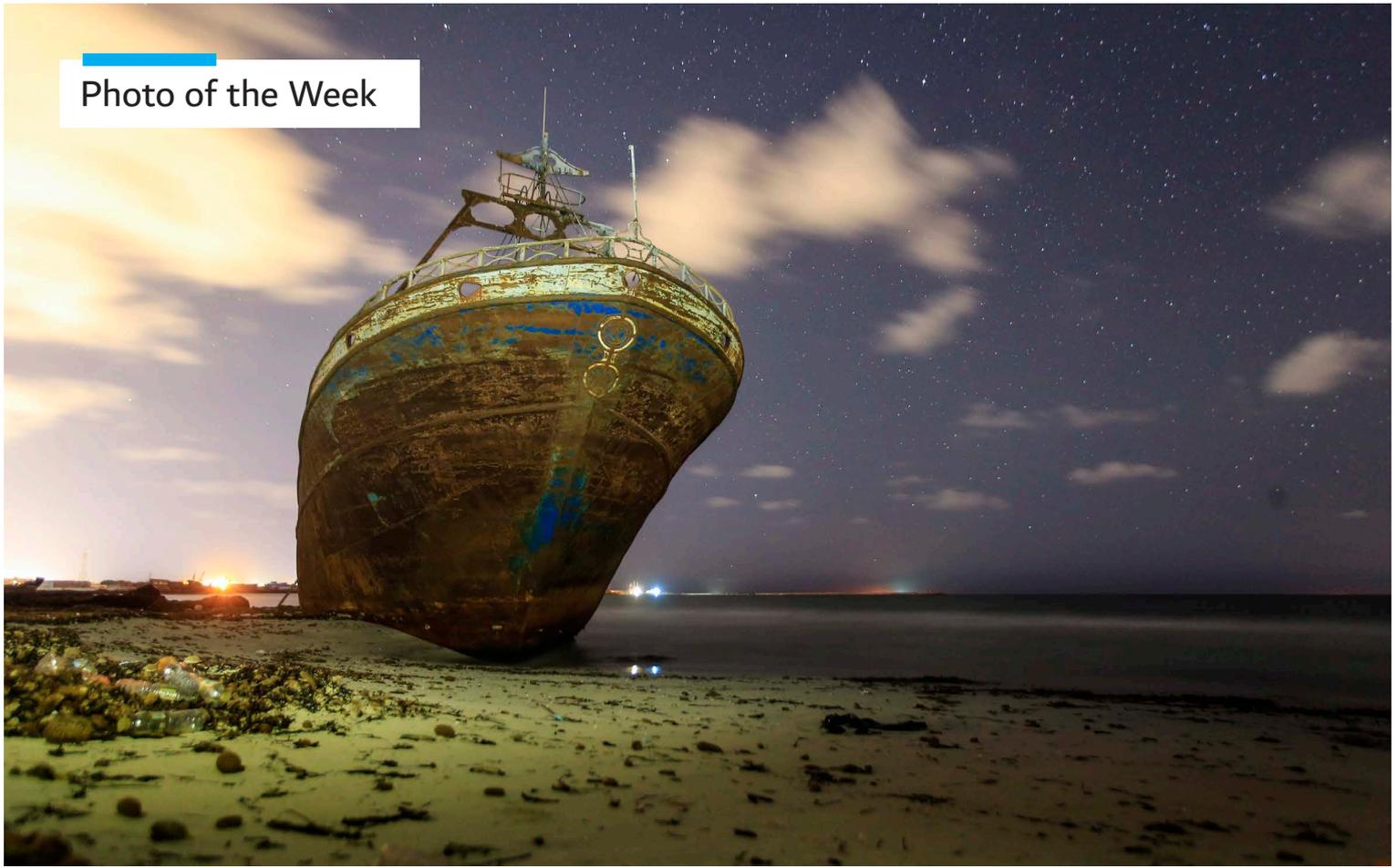
Libya's national weightlifting team took off to a flying start after clinching six medals in the African Youth and Junior Championships taking place in Morocco.

The competition kicked off in the Moroccan city of Casablanca last Friday and will continue until September 30.

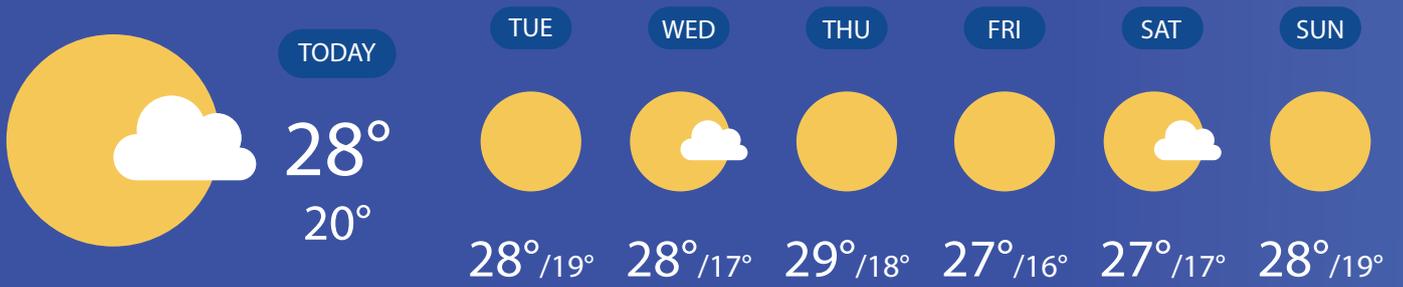
On Monday, Kamal Abdel Nasser Chalabi bagged three gold medals in the youth's 55 kg category, while Abdel Malik Abu Bakr Al Doukali clinched a gold medal, besides two silvers in the youth's 61kg, the Libyan Olympic Committee reported.

Libya's weightlifting team consists of 24 individuals, including administrators, coaches, and athletes.

Photo of the Week



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